Stateless and other Tamilian plantation workers in Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the talks and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Talks were held in regard to the problems of "the stateless persons of Indian origin" in Sri Lanka and other matters pertaining to the ethnic conflict in that country. These discussions were helpful in arriving at an understanding with the Governmnet of Sri Lanka on 15th January, 86, in regard to ending the residual problem of statelessness.

Request by a member of Indian Consulate for Political asylum in Canada

495. SHRI J. P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that I. S. Bindra, member in the Indian Consulate in Toronto in Canada had sought political asylum in Canada as a refugee;

(b) if so, what was the Canadian Government's response thereto; and

(c) whether the Government of India had taken up the issue with Canadian Government; if so, in what terms and what was the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Visit of official Indian Delegation to Pakistan

496. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an official Indian delegation led by Shri Romesh Bhandari, Foreign Secretary. visited Pakistan recently for talks on various bilateral issues;

(b) if so, what are the specific issues on which the talks were held and the details of agreements, if any, reached on different issues; and

(c) to what extent the Indo-Pak relations have improved as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Wide-ranging discussions were held on a number of regional and international issues as also key bilateral matters such as a comprehensive treaty of peace and friendship, non-attack of each others nuclear facilities and installations and other confidence building measures. It was agreed that a Cultural Agreement would be signed at the next Joint Commission meeting, civilian detainees who have completed their sentences would be repatriated on a reciprocal basis and a concerted attempt would be made to locate the Indian defence personnel missing since 1971.

(c) The discussions were conducive to a better understanding of each other's perceptions.

Indian steps to resolve ethnic issue in Sri Lanka

497. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI:

SHRIMATI AMARJIT KAUR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps the Government of India have taken during the last three months to help resolving the ethnic issue of Tamilians in Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the results achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.